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A

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

MAGDALEN HOSPITAL.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

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[PRICE 6d.]

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THE Governors of this Charity are concerned to find how much the deſign of this moſt humane and benevolent Inſtitution, and the mode of admiſſion into the Houſe, are *miſunderſtood*; and how generally its *exiſtence* is unknown to the greater number of thoſe unfortunate perſons, for whoſe relief and welfare it was eſtabliſhed. They are deſirous of diffuſing, as widely as poſſible, the knowlege of the benefits proceeding from it, and are convinced that ſome explanation of its nature, and a ſhort account of its proceedings, muſt tend to

recommend it to the Public. Its object is the relief and reformation of wretched outcasts from society; and the principle on which it is founded gives it, surely, some title to the countenance and favour of the Public, and *particularly of the female sex*; and her most gracious Majesty has set the example, by taking this Hospital under her more immediate patronage. And what can possibly be an object more worthy of *their* care, than the rescuing from the deepest woe and distress the most miserable of their fellow-creatures, leading them back from vice to virtue and happiness, reconciling the deluded and betrayed daughter to her offended mother, and restoring hundreds of unfortunate young women to industry, again to become useful members of that Community in which Providence has placed them?

The *Magdalen Hospital* was opened in the year 1758. During the period that it has subsisted, *more than two-thirds* of the

women

women who have been admitted have been reconciled to their friends, or placed in honeſt employments or reputable ſervices. Of this number, ſome undoubtedly have relapſed into their former errors; but many, who left the Houſe at their own requeſt, have ſince behaved well; and ſeveral of thoſe diſcharged for improper behaviour have, to the certain knowlege of the Committee, never returned to evil courſes. A very conſiderable number are ſince married, and are, at this moment, reſpectable members of ſociety; and, could their names and ſituations be diſcloſed, (which for the moſt obvious reaſons, would be highly improper) the very great utility of this Charity would appear in the ſtrongeſt light.

A Probationary Ward has been inſtituted for the young women on their firſt admiſſion; a ſeparation of thoſe of different deſcriptions and qualifications has been eſtabliſhed; and Apartments have been fitted up in the *Lodge* for the reſidence of the Chaplain,

Chaplain, the Reverend Mr. PRINCE, and his family; that he may with the greater facility continue to devote his time and attention to the inſtruction of the women, in the ſame moſt ſatisfactory manner in which he has hitherto performed all the duties of his ſituation.

Each claſs is entruſted to its particular Aſſiſtant, and the whole is under the inſpection of the Matron. This ſeparation, uſeful on many accounts, is peculiarly ſo to a numerous claſs of women who are much to be pitied, and to whom this Charity has been very beneficial; viz. *young women who have been ſeduced from their friends, under promiſe of marriage, and have been deſerted by their ſeducers.* They have never been in public proſtitution, but fly to the MAGDALEN to avoid it. Their relations, in the firſt moments of reſentment, refuſe to receive, protect, or acknowlege them; they are abandoned by the world, without character,

ter, without friends, without money, without reſource; and wretched indeed is their ſituation! To ſuch eſpecially this houſe of refuge opens wide its doors; and, inſtead of being driven by deſpair to lay violent hands on themſelves, and to ſuperadd the crime of ſelf-murder to that guilt which is the cauſe of their diſtreſs, or of being forced by the ſtrong call of hunger into proſtitution, they find a ſafe and quiet retreat in this abode of peace and reflection. To reſcue from the threatening horrors of proſtitution ſuch victims of the moſt baſe and ungenerous arts, whoſe ruin has frequently been more owing to their unſuſpecting innocence than to any other cauſe, to reſtore them to virtue and induſtry, after one falſe ſtep, and to reconcile them to their friends, are conſiderations of the greateſt magnitude. The Committee generally give theſe young women the preference, becauſe they are almoſt certain of the beſt conſequences; for it ſcarcely ever happens but their relations relent, when, by taking

ſhelter

ſhelter in this Houſe, they have given ſo ſtrong a proof of their determination to quit a vicious way of life.

The method of proceeding for the admiſſion of women into this Hoſpital is as follows; *The Firſt Thurſday in every Month* is an *admiſſion day*; when ſometimes from twenty to thirty petitioners appear, who, *without any recommendation whatever*, on applying at the door, to the Clerk, receive a printed form of petition *gratis*, which is properly filled up. Each petition is numbered, and a correſponding number is given to the petitioner herſelf. They are called in ſingly before the Board, and ſuch queſtions are put to them, as may enable the Committee to judge of the ſincerity of their profeſſions, and to aſcertain the truth of their aſſertions. If a parent, relation, or friend has accompanied them, (which though not neceſſary, is very deſirable, and is very frequently the caſe) theſe are alſo called in ſeperately and examined, with a view to confirm

confirm and ſtrengthen, if true, or to diſprove, if falſe, the account given by the women themſelves. The Committee take particular pains to ſelect for admiſſion the moſt deſerving; as it often happens that there are but few vacancies. In the next place, they endeavour, to the beſt of their ability, to aſſiſt ſuch other petitioners, as appear thoroughly reſolved to amend their lives. Many are reconciled to their friends, by the interpoſition of the Committee, even without being admitted into the Houſe; and others are ſupported until a vacancy takes place, that they may not be compelled by want to return to their evil ways. Women, whilſt diſeaſed, are not admiſſible, being objects for other Hoſpitals.

The treatment of the women is of the gentleſt kind. They are inſtructed in the principles of the Chriſtian Religion, in reading, and in ſeveral kinds of work, and the various branches of houſehold employment, to qualify them for ſervice, or other

 ſituations,

ſituations, wherein they may honeſtly earn their bread. The Chaplain attends them daily, to promote and encourage their good reſolutions, and to exhort them to religion and virtue. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is adminiſtered on the Great Feſtivals, and at other ſtated times, when many of the young women, who have been ſome time in the Houſe, and who, after having themſelves expreſſed their wiſh to be inſtructed in this duty, have been conſidered by the Chaplain as ſufficiently informed and prepared for it, receive it with the moſt ſerious attention.

The time they remain in the Houſe varies according to circumſtances. The greateſt pains are taken to find out their relations and friends, to bring about a reconciliation with them, and, if they be people of character, to put them under their protection; if, however, the young women are deſtitute of ſuch friends, they are retained in the Houſe till an opportunity offers of placing them

them in a reputable ſervice, or of procuring them the means of obtaining an honeſt livelihood. *No young woman, who has behaved well during her ſtay in the Houſe, is diſcharged unprovided for.*

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« dalen Hoſpital, for the Reception of Penitent Proſ-
« titutes, in St. George's-Road, in the County of
« Surrey, the Sum of
« *which I deſire may be paid out of my Perſonal Eſtate.*"

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